WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method of finding, in response to entry by a user of a resource identity signifier, a single intended target resource intended by the user to uniquely correspond to the resource identity signifier, among a plurality of resources located on a network comprising a plurality of interconnected computers, the method for use on a finder server having access to: (a) a database including (i) an index of resources available on the network; and (ii) information regarding user feedback gathered in previous executions of the method by the user and plural previous users; and (b) a learning system structured to access and learn from information contained in the database, the method comprising:

receiving a resource identity signifier from the user; and

accessing the database to determine, based on the information in the database, which, if any, of the indexed resources is likely to be the intended target resource.

2. A method according to Claim 1, further comprising:

directing a computer of the user so as to enable that computer to connect the user to the address of the resource, if any, determined as likely to be the intended target resource.

3. A method according to Claim 1, wherein a resource is determined, at the accessing step, as likely to be the intended target resource if the database

information indicates that a confidence level associated with that resource is of at least a predetermined level.

4. A method according to Claim 3, wherein if none of the indexed resources have an associated confidence level of at least the predetermined level, the method further comprises the following step:

presenting the user with a list of links to possible resources, the list being ordered on the basis of confidence level, the resources having the highest confidence levels being ranked highest.

5. A method according to Claim 3, wherein the method further comprises the following steps:

in a first user interface element:

causing the user's computer to connect to the URL of the indexed resource having the highest confidence level; and

in a second user interface element:

presenting the user with a list of links to possible resources, the list being ordered on the basis of confidence level, the resources having the highest confidence level being ranked highest.

6. A method according to Claim 4, further comprising, if a link has been selected, the following steps:

adding information regarding the selection of the link to the feedback information in the database;

soliciting user feedback with regard to the selected link; and

if the user indicates that the link is the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating the database information so as to increase the confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the selected link, and if the user indicates that the link is not the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating the database information so as to decrease the confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the selected link.

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7. A method according to Claim 2, further comprising the steps of:

soliciting user feedback with regard to the resource to which the user's computer was directed in the directing step; and

if the user indicates that the resource to which his or her computer was directed is the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating the database information so as to increase the confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the resource to which the user's computer was directed, and if the user indicates that the resource to which his or her computer was directed is not the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating the database information so as to decrease the confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the resource to which his or her computer was directed.

8. An apparatus comprising a finder server having access to: (a) a database including: (i) an index of resources available on a network of interconnected computers on which a plurality of resources reside; and (ii) information regarding user feedback gathered in previous operations of the apparatus by a user and plural previous users; and (b) a learning system operable to access and learn from information contained in the database;

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the finder server being operable to locate, in response to entry by the user of a resource identity signifier, a single intended target resource intended by the user to uniquely correspond to the resource identity signifier, from among a plurality of resources located on the network, by:

receiving a resource identity signifier from the user; and

accessing the database to determine, based on the information in the database, which, if any, of the indexed resources is likely to be the intended target resource.

9. An apparatus according to Claim 8, wherein the finder server is further operable to:

direct a computer of the user so as to cause that computer to connect the user to the address of the resource, if any, determined to be the intended target resource.

10. An apparatus according to Claim 8, wherein a resource is determined, in the accessing, to be the intended target resource if the database information

indicates that a confidence level associated with that resource is of at least a predetermined level.

11. An apparatus according to Claim 10, wherein the apparatus is operable to, if none of the indexed resources have an associated confidence level of at least the predetermined level, perform the following step:

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present the user with a list of links to possible resources, the list being ordered on the basis of confidence level, the resources having the highest confidence level being ranked highest.

12. An apparatus according to Claim 10, wherein the apparatus is further operable to:

in a first user interface element:

cause the user's computer to connect to the URL of the indexed resource having the highest confidence level; and

in a second user interface element:

present the user with a list of links to possible resources, the list being ordered on the basis of confidence level, the resources having the highest confidence level being ranked highest.

13. An apparatus according to Claim 11, wherein the apparatus is operable to, if a link has been selected, perform the following steps:

add information regarding the selection of the link to the feedback information in the database;

solicit user feedback with regard to the selected link; and

if the user indicates that the link is the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating the database information so as to increase the confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the selected link, and if the user indicates that the link is not the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating the database information so as to decrease the confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the selected link.

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14. An apparatus according to Claim 9, the apparatus being further operable to:

solicit user feedback with regard to the resource to which the user's computer was directed in the directing step; and

if the user indicates that the resource to which his or her computer was directed is the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating the database information so as to increase the confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the resource to which the user's computer was directed, and if the user indicates that the resource to which his or her computer was directed is not the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating the database information so as to decrease the confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the resource to which his or her computer was directed.

15. A system for finding, in response to entry by a user of a resource identity signifier, a single intended target resource intended by the user to uniquely correspond to the resource identity signifier, among a plurality of resources located on a network comprising a plurality of interconnected computers, the system comprising:

finder server means having access to: (a) database means for storing an index of resources available on the network; and information regarding user feedback gathered in previous executions of the system by the user and plural previous users; and (b) learning system means for accessing and learning from information contained on the database;

receiving means for receiving a resource identity signifier from the user; and

accessing means for accessing the database means to determine which, if any, of the indexed resources is likely to be the desired target resource.

16. A system according to Claim 15, further comprising:

directing means for directing a computer of the user so as to cause that computer to connect the user to the address of the resource, if any, determined in the access means to be the target resource.

17. A system according to Claim 15, wherein a resource is determined, by the access means, as likely to be the intended target resource if the database information indicates that a confidence level associated with that resource is of at least a predetermined level.

18. A system according to Claim 17, further comprising:

presenting means for, if none of the indexed resources have an associated confidence level of at least the predetermined level, presenting the user with a list of links to possible resources, the list being ordered on the basis of confidence level, the resources having the highest confidence levels being ranked highest.

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19. A system according to Claim 17, further comprising:

means for, in a first user interface element, causing the user's computer to connect to the URL of the indexed resource having the highest confidence level; and

means for, in a second user interface element, presenting the user with a list of links to possible resources, the list being ordered on the basis of confidence level, the resources having the highest confidence level being ranked highest

20. A system according to Claim 18, further comprising:

adding means for, if a link has been selected, adding information regarding the selection of the link to the feedback information in the database;

soliciting means for soliciting user feedback with regard to the selected link; and

means for, if the user indicates that the link is the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating the database information so as to increase the

confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the selected link, and if the user indicates that the link is not the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating the database information so as to decrease the confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the selected link.

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21. A system according to Claim 16, further comprising:

soliciting means for soliciting user feedback with regard to the resource to which the user's computer was directed in the directing step; and

means for, if the user indicates that the resource to which his or her computer was directed is the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating the database information so as to increase the confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the resource to which the user's computer was directed, and if the user indicates that the resource to which his or her computer was directed is not the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating the database information so as to decrease the confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the resource to which his or her computer was directed.

22. A computer-readable storage medium storing code for causing a processor-controlled finder server having access to: (a) a database including (i) an index of

resources available on the network; and (ii) information regarding user feedback gathered in previous executions of the finder server by a user and plural previous users; and (b) a learning system structured to access and learn from information contained on the database, to perform a method of finding, in response to entry by the user of a resource identity signifier, a single intended target resource intended by the user to uniquely correspond to the resource identity signifier, among a plurality of resources located on a network comprising a plurality of interconnected computers, the method comprising:

receiving a resource identity signifier from the user; and

accessing the database to determine, based on the information in the database, which, if any, of the indexed resources is likely to be the intended target resource.

23. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 22, wherein the method further comprises the step of:

directing a computer of the user so as to cause that computer to connect the user to the address of the resource, if any, determined as likely to be the intended target resource.

24. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 22, wherein a resource is determined, in the accessing step, as likely to be the intended target resource if the database information indicates that a confidence level associated with that resource is of at least a predetermined level.

25. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 24, wherein if none of the indexed resources have an associated confidence level of at least the predetermined level, the method further comprises the following step:

presenting the user with a list of links to possible resources, the list being ordered on the basis of confidence level, the resources having the highest confidence levels being ranked highest.

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26. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 24, wherein the method further comprises the following steps:

in a first user interface element:

causing the user's computer to connect to the URL of the indexed resource having the highest confidence level; and

in a second user interface element:

presenting the user with a list of links to possible resources, the list being ordered on the basis of confidence level, the resources having the highest confidence level being ranked highest.

27. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 25, further comprising, if a link has been selected, the following steps:

adding information regarding the selection of the link to the feedback information in the database;

soliciting user feedback with regard to the selected link; and

if the user indicates that the link is the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating

the database information so as to increase the confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the selected link, and if the user indicates that the link is not the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating the database information so as to decrease the confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the selected link.

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28. A computer-readable medium according to Claim 23, further comprising the steps of:

soliciting user feedback with regard to the resource to which the user's computer was directed in the directing step; and

if the user indicates that the resource to which his or her computer was directed is the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating the database information so as to increase the confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the resource to which the user's computer was directed, and if the user indicates that the resource to which his or her computer was directed is not the resource intended by the resource identity signifier, updating the database information so as to decrease the confidence level associated with the mapping between the resource identity signifier and the address of the resource to which his or her computer was directed.

29. A system for finding resources on a network of interconnected computers on which a plurality of resources reside, the system comprising:

a client terminal operated by a user, the client terminal allowing the user to connect to resources located on the network; and

a finder server having access to:

(a) a database including: (i) an index of resources available on the network; and (ii) information regarding user feedback gathered in previous operations of the system by the user and plural previous users; and

(b) a learning system operable to access and learn from information contained in the database,

the finder server being operable to locate, in response to entry by the user of a resource identity signifier, a single intended target resource intended by the user to uniquely correspond to the resource identity signifier, from among a plurality of resources located on the network, by:

receiving a resource identity signifier from the user;

accessing the database to determine, based on the information in the database, which, if any, of the indexed resources is likely to be the intended target resource; and

directing a computer of the user so as to cause that computer to connect the user to the address of the resource, if any, determined as likely to be the intended target resource.

30. A method of identifying, in response to entry by a user of an object identity signifier, a single intended object to be acted upon, the single intended object being intended by the user to uniquely correspond to the object identity signifier, among a plurality of possible objects, the method for use on a computer having access to: (a) a database including (i) an index of possible objects; and (ii) information regarding user feedback gathered in previous executions of the method by the user and plural previous users; and (b) a learning system structured to access and learn from information contained in the database, the method comprising:

receiving an object identity signifier from the user; and

accessing the database to determine, based upon the information in the database, which, if any, of the indexed objects is likely to be the object intended to be acted upon.

31. An apparatus for identifying, in response to entry by a user of an object identity signifier, a single intended object to be acted upon, the single intended object being intended by the user to uniquely correspond to the object identity signifier, among a plurality of possible objects, the apparatus comprising:

a computer having access to: (a) a database including (i) an index of possible objects; and (ii) information regarding user feedback gathered in previous executions of the method by the user and plural previous users; and (b) a learning system

structured to access and learn from information contained in the database, the apparatus being operable to:

receive an object identity signifier from the user; and

access the database to determine, based upon the information in the database, which, if any, of the indexed objects is likely to be the object intended to be acted upon.

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